

REMARKS

Claim 1 is pending in this application. Claim 1 has been amended and no new claims have been added.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, for failing to comply with the written description requirement.

In the most recent Office Action, the Examiner referred to the recited passage “in the fully tightened position,” which was changed via amendment in the response dated June 14, 2005 to read “is in a tightened-up state.” In a telephonic interview with the Examiner on August 19, 2005, Applicants’ undersigned attorney discussed this matter and the Examiner indicated that the 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, rejection had been overcome by the previous amendment and should be disregarded in the present Office Action and that no further amendment is necessary.

The Examiner has maintained from the previous Office Action the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claim 1 as unpatentable over Nakazawa et al. in view of McGarvey.

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The Examiner has admitted that Nakazawa et al. fails to disclose the gasket holding annular ridges being rounded so as to be in contact with the gasket only at its radial midpoint, but has cited McGarvey for teaching this feature.

Applicants respectfully disagree. McGarvey discloses a face sealing fitting which includes two connectable tubular elements each having an annular end formation and a metal gasket including an outer annular section with a first axial dimension, an inner annular section

concentric with the outer annular section and having a smaller axial dimension, and a tapered section having bevel faces between the inner and outer annular sections. Portions of the annular end formations which project axially the farthest beyond the tubular elements have a diameter substantially equal to the inner diameter of the inner annular gasket section and lie along the inner surface of the tubular elements to minimize dead volumes along the flowpath through the fitting.

The Examiner has urged that FIG. 6 of McGarvey teaches “gasket holding annular ridges (76, 78) being rounded as to be in contact with the gasket (52) only at its radial midpoint to produce a minimum dead zone volume condition.”

Applicants respectfully disagree. Items 76, 78 are “nose portions” which project from glands 54, 56 to provide “flaring portions 72, 74,” as shown in FIGS. 6-7. These “nose portions” do not correspond to the annular ridges 81a, 82a shown in FIG. 2a of the instant application and, furthermore, their contact points with the gasket are not at the radial midportions of the gasket, as shown in FIG. 2a of the instant application.

FIG. 4 shows rounded sections 36, 38 abutting conical faces 32, 34 of gasket 12, but also fails to show gasket holding annular ridges which are rounded so as to be in contact with the gasket only at its radial midportion, as recited in claim 1 of the instant application.

FIG. 1 of McGarvey shows the inner diameter of the gasket to be equal to the diameter of the opening passageway, and FIG. 3 of McGarvey shows the inner diameter of the gasket to be greater than the diameter of the opening passageway. This is in contrast to the present invention,

in which the gasket (73) has an inside diameter less than the diameter of the opening passageway, as shown in FIG. 1(b), as disclosed on page 8, lines 10-12 of the specification, and as recited in claim 1, as originally filed, of the present invention.

In the present invention, as shown in Table 1 in the instant specification, when the coupling has a slanting main passageway, all of the “Flow rate,” “States as tightened up” and “Replaceability” are to be made “Good.” In contrast, in McGarvey, there is no description as to the configuration when the coupling has a slanting main passageway. Therefore, the combination of Nakazawa et al. and McGarvey does not teach the present invention. In fact, in McGarvey, the inner diameter of the gasket differs greatly “in a finger-tight position” and “in a tightened up state.” Consequently, McGarvey cannot obtain the advantageous effect of the present invention, which is “to relieve the inner peripheral portion of the gasket from stress concentration and wrinkles.”

Furthermore, in McGarvey the gasket 12 is engaged on opposite sides with conical faces 32 and 34, while in the present invention the gasket is engaged on opposite sides with flat faces.

Accordingly, claim 1 has been amended to recite this distinction.

Thus, the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claim 1 should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

In view of the aforementioned remarks, claim 1 is in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

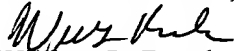
U.S. Patent Application Serial No. **09/437,296**
Response to Office Action dated August 17, 2005

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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